Saint Expedite

Jamie Alexzander

SAINT EXPEDITE

BY JAMIE ALEXZANDER

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CHURCH, NEW ORLEANS.
ALCOVE WITH STATUE OF ST. EXPEDITE.

Expedite is one of a growing number of 'folk saints'. A folk saint is one chosen by the people as opposed to those saints canonised by the Holy Roman church. Folk saints are not recognised by the Vatican but by the people who love them.

Saint Expedite is known as the patron saint of rapid solutions. He is prayed to when a situation needs to be turned around, hurried along or changed. He is revered in Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Latin America and is highly regarded in New Orleans, where he is considered to be a patron of the city. His shrine can be found at the Chapel of Our Lady of Guadalupe on North Rampart Street. The shrine at Rampart Street is to me the most famous shrine. Private homes, shops and even certain streets have unofficial shrines to this wonder-working saint.

He is the unofficial saint of emergencies, businesses, shop keepers, examinees and basically anyone who needs a rapid solution! Expedite is a favourite of rootworkers simply because he is effective and quick. Rootworkers call on Expedite with confidence, knowing he will provide those who petition him with exactly what they need.

The legend that tells of Expedite's arrival in New Orleans says that when the Chapel of Our Lady of Guadalupe was being fitted out, the priests sent off to Spain for a large and beautiful statue of the Virgin Mary. Time passed and eventually a ship arrived containing two crates. On opening the first crate they found the beautiful, commissioned statue of "Our Lady of Guadalupe". In turn they opened the second to find a statue of a handsome Roman soldier. In innocence they mistook the shipping instruction "EXPEDITE" for the name of the saint image within.

Expedite is depicted as a handsome Roman soldier wearing traditional uniform, armour and a red cloak. In his right hand he holds a cross upon which are written the word HODIE, the Latin word for 'today', and underfoot he crushes a crow, from whose mouth spouts a ribbon on which the words CRAS CRAS CRAS can be seen — cras being Latin for 'tomorrow'. This is symbolic of Expedite destroying Tomorrow in favour of Today. Expedite is believed to have been tortured and killed under the rule of King Diocletian, His feast day is April 19th.

There's a hilarious story about Expedite in which a woman in Louisiana had been hypnotised on her own doorstep by a man who requestd she retrieve all the money in the house and bring it to him.

Being under his spell she did just that and the man began to walk away with all of her cash.

The woman, now aware of what had happened, shouted out after him and he started to run. Knowing she won't catch him up, she called out for Expedite. Suddenly, out of nowhere, a wooden plank flew through the air and knocked the thief square in the head, rendering him unconscious, allowing the woman to retrieve her cash and probably some of his!

Working with Expedite

A shrine for Expedite is quite simple to set up. Figures of him aren't easy to come by but can be found in markets in Brazil and can of course be purchased in most southern botanicas in the United States. First wash the space you are going to use with the following mixture:

> Take three cups of spring water and bring them to the boil, add to this a handful of the herb Hyssop. Allow it to simmer for roughly five minutes and then take it off the heat. Once it has cooled strain it through muslin and dissolve a small handful of rock salt in to it.

Next, dress the shrine with a red cloth. On my personal shrine I use a framed picture of Expedite. His colours are red and gold and candles of this colour should be burned in his honour (the best kinds are the seven or nine day glass-encased candles). Next to his picture or statue set out a glass of fresh water for him. The water should be changed daily. If it's possible pour the old water on your front doorstep; if you can't do this sprinkle a few drops near your door and tip the rest away. Other items that should be set on the shrine are a plate and a vase.

As a soldier Expedite expects to be paid for his work and it is important to only ask for one thing at a time. The traditional method of payment is to make an offering of pound cake. A pound cake, as the name suggests, is the kind of cake made with 1lb of each ingredient. This is Expedite's favourite offering. Some folks will tell you to set out just a slice, while others say the whole cake. Some people say the cake

should have a candle placed on top of it while others say it should be wrapped in a white handkerchief. I have always set the whole cake out on Expedite's own plate and lit a tea-light candle on top of it.

This payment should always be made on completion of a favour granted by Expedite and *always* make sure to give him fresh flowers. Many people will stress the importance of this! Red carnations are his favourite floral offerings; legend has it that if Saint Expedite grants you a boon and he is not offered flowers along with his cake, a member of your household will pass over.

Expedite can also be made offerings of incense, the most favoured blend being equal parts frankincense, myrrh and sandalwood. He also favours watered-down red wine, Roman coins, and bread, and being a patron of New Orleans I have known him to accept the odd glass of bourbon. Just make sure that whatever you offer is paid in full once he has completed his task. Always keep up your end of the bargain or things *will* go wrong!

A final note on serving Saint Expedite is to remember that he loves attention, so spreading his name about always wins his favour. Public thanks and altars in shops always go down well! It is not uncommon to find thanks to him in the local newspapers where he has large followings.

To Petition Saint Expedite

Although he is not recognised officially by the church, he himself is a martyr so it is important to know both the Our Father and the Hail Mary.

OUR FATHER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
Amen.

HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace.
Our Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

Before you make any requests from Expedite it is important to build a relationship with him. Change his water daily, light candles for him at the shrine you have set up. Buy him a few gifts, maybe a red rosary or place a few crow feathers on the shrine. By doing this you better attune to the saint, you build a rapport and make a connection with him. You wouldn't randomly ask a stranger for help, but you always know you can rely on your best friend.

There are two ways to go about making a request to Expedite. The first is to stand before the shrine, light the candles and set out a fresh glass of water. Say the Our Father once and the Hail Mary three times. Make the sign of the cross over yourself, kiss your hand and touch the shrine. Kneel before the altar and say:

I kneel before you, Saint Expedite.
Expedite my protector, Expedite my friend.
Blessed martyr I pray for your intercession,
Joy and tranquillity reign in my home thanks to you
But I ask, I pray.

(State your petition)

And I will give thanks and praise for your glorious intercession.

(now make your bargain with him)

Amen

Once the request has been granted, make the promised offering as soon as possible. Remember to set out fresh flowers along with any other items. After a few days dispose of any perishable offerings. Traditionally they can be left at the steps of a Catholic church, at a crossroads, or at the foot of a tree.

The second method is to write out your request in the form of a prayer. Neatly handwrite what it is you want along with what you will offer the saint, finish it with an *amen* and sign the bottom and fold the paper in half. Set it on a heatproof dish on the shrine. Next say one Our Father and three Hail Mary's. Pick up the request and light it in the flame of one of the candles.

I will note here that you should never use matches to light the shrine candles or petition papers. Matches are still considered a taboo; in previous years matches contained sulphur and sulphur is used in the Hoodoo tradition to banish spirits. Even though matches rarely contain sulphur these days, it is seen as a mark of respect not to use them.

Leave the ashes on the shrine until your request has been granted, then dispose of them along with any of the perishable offerings. Once again serve Expedite his offerings as soon as possible and be sure to set out fresh flowers for him.

Expedite Spells

Saint Expedite Bath

If you feel that you are blocked, stuck in a rut or just need some positive change in your life, prepare this spiritual bath under the patronage of Saint Expedite. This bath is also great when done the night before any exams.

You will need to save the offering water for three days storing it in a large jar. Add to this a big splash of cologne such as Florida Water. Take a cup of spring water and boil it up, add a cinnamon stick, a spoonful of brown sugar, a small chunk of ginger root, and a small High John the Conqueror root. Pour all of this into the jar of offering water. Lastly, add the heads of three red carnations. The mixture should steep overnight until the following evening. That evening strain the liquid off and add it to a bath of running water. Say over the bath Psalm 23:

The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still waters
He restoreth my soul:
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemes;
thou anointest my headwith oil; my cup runneth over
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.
and I will dwell in the house of The Lord
forever.

Soak in the water for at least half an hour, after which time towel dry and dress in clean clothes. Go to the shrine and make an offering of incense; burning frankincense on charcoal is the most favoured.

the seas have lifted up their voice;
the seas have lifted up their pounding waves.
Mightier than the thunder of the great waters,
mightier than the breakers of the sea—
the LORD on high is mighty.
Your statutes, LORD, stand firm;
holiness adorns your house
for endless days.

Now use the crow feathers like a duster to dust the powder over yourself from head to toe. Repeat the psalm again and dust off the feathers into the bowl. Use the now clean feathers to brush the powder off yourself in a downwards motions. The curse should now be broken and reversed!

Examinee Mojo Hand

This bag is used to get the results you want. It is not a substitute for studying, but it can aid in getting better results than you expect. Take a small red flannel bag and put twenty-one allspice berries in it, next add a large tear of frankincense, a large pinch of cinquefoil, a pinch of caraway, and a pinch of cinnamon bark. Tie the bag up tight and anoint it with a little bergamot oil. Say Psalm 121 over the bag:

I look up to the mountains; does my strength come from mountains?
No, my strength comes from God,
who made heaven, and earth, and mountains.
He won't let you stumble, your Guardian God won't fall asleep.
Not on your life! Israel's Guardian will never doze or sleep.
God's your Guardian, right at your side to protect you-
Shielding you from sunstroke,
sheltering you from moon stroke.
God guards you from every evil,
he guards your very life.
He guards you when you leave and when you return,
he guards you now, he guards you always.

Light a small yellow candle and place the bag before it. Carry this bag with you into the exam.

Expedite Talisman

This talisman will strengthen your connection with saint Expedite and helps to gain his favour. Take a plain wooden cross, the kind you would wear as a pendant, and place it on the shrine. For seven days fumigate it by running it through the smoke of frankincense, myrrh, and sandalwood. While you do this repeat the Hail Mary ten times. After performing this, rub the pendant down with holy water taken from a Catholic church.

Each day set the pendant on the shrine and light a red candle for about an hour. It's worth noting that the best kind of candle for this job would be a red seven knob candle; these can be obtained from most good esoteric and occult supply shops. On the seventh day fumigate and anoint the cross as you have been doing but when it is dry take a red hot needle and burn the word 'HODIE' into it.

Obtain a bottle of Van-Van oil and anoint the cross with it. Allow the last part of the candle to burn down and say a prayer to Saint Expedite over it, devoting this talisman to him and his powers. String the pendant on a red thread and you can now wear this pendant to honour Expedite.

Saint Expedite's Lucky Penny

This spell requires an old penny but any coin that is out of circulation will do. Preferably on a Wednesday, attend morning mass with the coin in your pocket. Before you enter the church wet your fingers and then the coin at the stoop font. Holding the coin concealed in your hand, make the sign of the cross.

After the mass light a candle in the church in honour of Saint Expedite, then return home and place the coin on the shrine. That evening take a heat proof dish and place the coin in it. Splash the coin with a dash of cologne and set it alight. As the flames lick at the coin say:

Holy saint, blessed martyr,
The fires of heaven make luck come faster.
Amen

Repeat this until the fire goes out. Allow the coin to cool and wash it in a mixture of spring water and cologne that has steeped with cinnamon bark. Dry the coin off and place it on the altar. On top of it place a red votive candle that has been sprinkled with Double Fast Luck oil, also known as Red Fast Luck, or and a few pinches of powdered cinnamon. When the candle has burnt out the penny is ready for use. You can use this lucky penny as a gambling charm or just to ensure good luck in your day-to-day life.

Saint Expedite Justice Spell

Saint Expedite is an excellent ally when you need justice to be done. Take a clean, clear glass bottle with a lid and set it to one side. On a sheet of brown paper write the name of the person who has wronged you nine times. Roll it up and tie it with black thread, and put it in the jar. Next add a handful of powdered galangal root, a handful of marigold petals, a few pinches of tobacco, and a few pinches of black mustard seed. Top the bottle up with equal parts holy water, white rum and a tea made from oregano. Seal this bottle up tightly and glue an image of Expedite to it. Speak this prayer over it:

My protector Saint Expedite
I pray now to you, I have been wronged
I have been crushed beneath the foot of my enemy
I turn to you, I pray for you intercession
Amen

Each day burn a small brown or purple candle on the bottle's lid until you have been justified. When the work is complete, offer Saint Expedite a pound cake and throw the bottle in a river.

The Novena of Expedite

The word *novena* is linked to the word 'nine' and is a series of prayers performed over the course of nine days. It is prayed to receive special graces from the saints. Each saint has their own novena which is performed in conjunction with the setting of lights. The novena can be performed as a devotional act and should be done as often as possible. On your shrine set out a red candle.

On the first day before you light the candle say:

My Lord Jesus Christ, Father of endless charity,
I am heartily sorry for my sins.
Grant me, therefore, pardon of my sins
and the grace I ask of you through the merits of the sorrows
of your loving Mother
and the virtues of your martyr, Saint Expedite.

Each day when you light the candle say:

Oh Saint Expeditus, my protector,
in you I place my hope that my petitions may be granted
if they are for my own good.
Please ask Our Lord,
through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin,
for the forgiveness of my sins,
and the grace to change my life,
particularly the grace ...
(mention here the particular grace desired)
and I promise to follow your examples
and will propagate this devotion to you.

First Day's Prayer

O Glorious Martyr, Saint Expeditus,
through the lively faith which was granted you by God,
I ask you to awaken the same faith in my heart,
that I may also believe wholeheartedly that there is God,
but most particularly that I may be saved
from sinning against Him.

At this point say three Our Father's.

Concluding Prayer for Each Day

Remember O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection,
implored thy help, and sought thine intercession was left unaided.
Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my
Mother. To thee I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O
Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my words but graciously
hear and grant my prayer. Amen.

Say one Hail Mary and snuff out the candle.

Day Two

My Lord Jesus Christ, Father of endless charity,
I am heartily sorry for my sins. Grant me, therefore, pardon of my
sins and the grace I ask of you through the merits of the sorrows
of your loving Mother and the virtues of your martyr, Saint Expedite.
O Glorious Martyr, Saint Expeditus,
through the enviable hope given you by God,
pray that those of little belief may be penetrated
by some rays of hope so that they also receive eternal things;
please pray that ardent hope in God
be also given me and hold me steadfast
in the midst of sufferings.

Say three Our Father's then:

Remember O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection,
implored thy help, and sought thine intercession was left unaided.
Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto thee,
O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To thee I come; before thee I stand,
sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate,
despise not my words but graciously hear and grant my prayer.
Amen.

Day Three

My Lord Jesus Christ ...
O Glorious Martyr, Saint Expeditus,
through the endless love which Our Lord planted in your heart,
please remove from mine all the shackles tied by worldliness,
that without them I may love only God in all eternity.
Amen.

Three Our Father's, then the concluding prayer.

Day Four

My Lord Jesus Christ ...
O Glorious Martyr, Saint Expeditus, who knew fully well the teaching of the Divine Teacher to carry the cross and follow Him, ask Him for the graces I need that I may fight my own passions.
Three Our Father's then the concluding prayer.

Day Five

My Lord Jesus Christ ...
O Glorious Martyr, Saint Expeditus, through the bountiful graces you received from Heaven that you may conserve all your virtues, grant also that I may get rid of all the feelings that block my way to Heaven.

Three Our Father's then the concluding prayer.

Day Six

My Lord Jesus Christ ...
O Glorious Martyr, Saint Expeditus, through the sufferings and humiliations which you received for the love of God, grant me also this grace which is very pleasing to God, and free me from anger and hardness of heart which is the stumbling block of my soul.

Three Our Father's then the concluding prayer.

Day Seven

My Lord Jesus Christ ...
O Glorious Martyr, Saint Expeditus,
you know that prayer is the golden key that will open
the Kingdom of Heaven,
teach me to pray in a manner which is desirable to Our Lord and to His Heart, that I may live only for Him, that I may die only for Him, and that I may pray only to Him in all eternity.

Three Our Father's then the concluding prayer.

Day Eight

My Lord Jesus Christ ...O Glorious Martyr, Saint Expeditus, through the clean desire that reigned in all your feelings, word and actions, please let them guide me also in my endless search for the glory of God and the good of my fellowmen.

Three Our Father's then the concluding prayer.

Day Nine

My Lord Jesus Christ ...
O Glorious Martyr, Saint Expeditus,
who was so much loved by the Queen of Heaven,
that to you nothing was denied, ask her, please my advocate,
that through the sufferings of her Divine Son and her own sorrows,
I may receive this day the grace I ask of you;
but above all the grace to die first
before I commit any mortal sin.
Amen.

Three Our Father's then the concluding prayer.

If there is any remaining candle allow it to burn out completely. Put out a bunch of fresh flowers for him on the last day. The novena is one of the best devotional acts that can be performed to the saints and by performing it on a regular basis you will really notice the benefits.

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